

Student Engagement & Belonging for a diverse student population

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Vox Pop

- If you were to ask the 'general' public to think of words associated with university students and going to university what would people say?

Research Background

- 2x qualitative studies at a predominately white university
- Interviews with BME students
- Using three students to illustrate in this ppt.
 - Kingsley
 - Janice
 - Sarah

Key points

- Do we properly recognise who our students are?
- Do our practices reflect the needs of our students?

Social integration / participation - a pervasive notion

My ethnicity plays a part in me struggling to fit in because,...Fresher's, they want to go out, they want to go partying and clubbing and drinking ...and that's just not part of my culture, that's not who I am.
(Sarah)

- Even though this student could not be involved in these types of activities she felt like she was missing out on an important part of university.

Role of societies

I've tried to get involved with some of the societies and stuff like that, and it's not really, I don't know, it's just not really worked out for me. (Kingsley)

So yes, I did sign up to a few ...I would get emails through, oh hey guys, we're meeting up at 8.30 on this evening and it, you know, times like that and on certain days, it just didn't work for me. So I was, you know, I just said, I'm not going to bother committing.

'A typical student' ???

- Janice – mature student, married, mother
- Kingsley – socialises in local community because it is more diverse and covers his interests better
- Sarah – commuter student who socialises with friends from previous FE college.

Belonging

How is belonging created?

- Janice – does not feel belonging – would like to feel more engaged with the peers in class-time and on campus (would like academic integration).
- Kingsley – separates university / home – is involved with peers for academic but socialises outside. (has academic integration).
- Sarah – struggling because of FOMO. Tends to socialise with existing peer networks.
- **3 students for whom university plays very little part in their social life.**

Actions for institutions

- Focus on academic integration.
- Co-curricula embedded in programmes.
- Combat 'traditional' notions of a typical student lifestyle.